



NEWS BULLETIN

SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT of CIVIL SERVICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

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For Your Information

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY AWARENESS

Motorcycles are vehicles with the same rights and privileges as any motor vehicle on the roadway. Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month is a national initiative aimed at getting motorists and motorcyclists to **"share the road"** with each other.

Now that the warmer weather is here motorcyclists are out in force. It's crucial that motorists **always make a visual check for motorcycles** by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections. *"Motorcycles are some of the smallest vehicles on our roads, often hidden in a vehicle's blind spot so everyone needs to really look out for them,"* said Suffolk County Sheriff Vincent DeMarco.

"Due to a motorcycle's relatively small size, it is often difficult for a motorist to accurately judge the speed of an oncoming motorcycle. It is imperative that motorists take extra caution before turning in front of a motorcycle," said Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone.

Here are some of the recommendations from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's "Share the Road" driver awareness programs:

- Allow a motorcyclist a full lane width. Although it may seem that there is enough room in the traffic lane for a motor vehicle and a motorcycle, the motorcycle needs the room to maneuver safely. Do not share the lane.
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic. This allows motorcyclists to anticipate traffic flow and find a safe lane position.
- Because of its smaller size, a motorcyclist can be hidden in a vehicle's blind spot. Always check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections.
- Don't be fooled by a flashing turn signal on a motorcycle – motorcycle signals may not be self-canceling and motorcyclists sometimes forget to turn them off. Wait to be sure the rider is going to turn before you proceed.
- Remember that road conditions that are minor annoyances to motorists can pose major hazards to motorcyclists. Motorcycle riders may change speed or adjust position within a lane suddenly in reaction to road and traffic conditions such as potholes, gravel, wet or slippery surfaces, pavement seams, railroad crossings, and grooved pavement.
- Allow more following distance - three or four seconds - when following a motorcycle so the motorcycle rider has enough time to maneuver or stop in an emergency. In dry conditions, motorcycles can stop more quickly than cars.

"Increasing the public's awareness of motorcyclists on the road is an important first step in helping to achieve our goal of motorcycle safety. We thank Suffolk County Legislator Robert Calarco who is sponsoring legislation to designate May as motorcycle awareness month in Suffolk," said Jim Barr, President of ABATE's Long Island Chapter. ABATE (American Bikers Aimed Toward Education) is an organization that raises awareness in regard to issues affecting motorcyclists and serves as a liaison between the motorcycle community and local officials, police departments, and other organizations.

Motorcycles are Everywhere - Look Twice, Save a Life!